(c) if so, what arc the details thereof and whether China has reguted these allegations ?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL All AIRS (SHRI 13. R. BHAGAT): (a) Discussions on regional and bilateral issues of common concern were held during- our Prime Minister's meeting with the Chirese Premier, Mr. Zhao Ziyang, in New York on 23rd October. 1985.

(b) and (c) The Government have seen press reports in this regard. The Chief of Army Staff, General A. S. Vaidya was only expressing concern at some reports alleging that Pakistan might carry out a nuclear explosion in a third country friendly *to* Pakistan. The Chinese Government have, however, categorically denied the allegation that Pakistan will conduct an atomic bomb test in China and have also stated that China's nuclear cooperation with other countries is confined *to* peaceful purposes

Off-shore Mining Prospects in the Arabean Sea

615. SHRIMATI SUDHA VIJAY JOSHI: Will the TRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether any survey lias been carried out in tire Arabean Sea to assess the potential for off-shore mini

(b) if so. what is the result of such survey; and

(c; if the potential is encoura-ing whether Government propose to draw a plan for its commercial 1.11 inn ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT ATOMIC ENERGY, ELECTRONICS AND SPACE (SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL): :'a) .aid (b) Yes, Sir. Extensive survey of the coastal water of India lias been made for various minerals. The results have been encouraging. Mapping of minerals almost in the entire western continental shelf in the Arabean Sea has been completed resulting in an understanding of placer deposits like ilmenite, rutile, zircon, phosphorite and monazitc with varying proportions ofmagnetite and garnet.

(c) The Department is presently concentrating on the survey and exploration, mapping and assessment of resource potentialities in the offshore regions. Because of the high cost involved in the exploitation of off-shore minerals from the seabed and considering the present level of development in the technology, commercial exploitation of the aforesaid minerals in the off-shore regions will be taken up at an appropriate time.

Posting of India-based Officers in Indian Missions abroad

616. SHRIMATI SUDHA VIJAY JOSHI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any review has been made recently by his Ministry regarding posting of India based officers in the Indian missions abroad;

(b) whether it has resulted in an increase or decrease in such posts; and

(c) whether any decision has been taken regarding posting at 'Labour Attache' in Indian missions, particularly in Gulf countries by creating such posts?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI B. R. BHAGAT): (a) No, Sir. The staffing pattern in Missions/Posts abroad is kept under constant review.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No, Sir. Indian Missions and Posts aborad perform various consular